

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [05] starting on page 1, line 14, with the following amended paragraph:

[0005] And the present application is a continuation-in-part and claims the benefit of priority from Ser. No. 09/436,524, filed November 9, 1999, for "Stabilizer for Robotic Bearing-Heart Surgery" (Attorney Docket No. 017516-002530), now issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,398,726;

Please replace paragraph [107] starting on page 20, line 29, with the following amended paragraph:

[0107] FIG. 11B illustrates a slide bearing 1080 having a central bore 1081 and a hemispherical mating surface 1082. The locking ball 1076 is positioned so that it is mateable against the hemispherical mating surface 1082 and the cable 20 passes through the central bore 1081 as shown. The slide bearing ~~[[1076]]~~ 1080 also includes pin apertures 1074a through which pins 1074 are fittable as illustrated by arrows.

Please replace paragraph [158] starting on page 31, line 8, with the following amended paragraph:

[0158] Following toe rotation, the action of cable 21 acts to frictionally lock or adjustably brake toe 19 from further movement as follows: Pivot pin 64 engages casing 68 with a selected degree of longitudinal clearance or play as indicated by clearance spaces 69 and 70, thus permitting casing 68 to move slightly longitudinally in the direction shown by Arrow C as tension is applied to cable 21. This movement of casing 68 in turn pulls on stabilizer mounting ball 72 which mounts stabilizing surface 22 by engagement of toe socket 74. Contact of ball 72 with socket 74 at distal contact area 75 in turn causes movement of ball ~~[[70]]~~ 72 in the direction of Arrow D. Ball 72 in turn impinges upon the distal end of push-rod 76 at contact area 77, moving push-rod 76 along the toe axis in the direction shown by Arrow E. The push-rod 76 in turn contacts rod seating pin 78 at contact point 79, preventing further movement of rod 78. The clearances at spaces 69, 70, 75, 77 and 79 are selected so that when the cable 21 is tensioned to a selected locking tension, the frictional forces at these contact areas is substantial and acts as a locking break to effectively resist and prevent rotational motion of ball 72 in ball housing 74 during the conduct of surgery. Optionally, surface 77 of pin 76 may be provided with an abrasive coating or pattern to increase friction (e.g., bonded diamond dust).

Please replace paragraph [161] starting on page 32, line 1, with the following amended paragraph:

[0161] FIGS. 28A-28B are section views of the external or base portion of the stabilizer 15 showing the quick-release mechanism 32 in the fixed and released positions

respectively. Note in FIG. 28A that the adjustable cable tensioner 23 may be preadjusted to a selected tension of cable 20, as described above, so that the knob 24 bears on thrust bearing 28. In this example, thrust bearing 28 is seated on bearing plate 80 in proximal shaft housing 30. The bearing plate 80 is in turn supported by release plate 82. An opposed pair of release handles 84, 84' are mounted to the sides of housing 30 by rigid connections to axles 85, 85' which are in turn pivoted to the sides of housing 30. The axles 85, 85' are rigidly connected to internal release cams 86, 86' within housing 30. In the example shown, each of release cams 86 comprises a round section eccentrically mounted to axle 85, so as to have an angularly-variable cam-like profile relative to the axle 85. The cam profile of the release cam 86 is configured to contact and support release plate 82 when the handle 84 is moved to the closed position as shown by Arrow F in FIG. 28A, i.e., the surface portion of cam 86 in contact with plate 82 is at or near the maximum or high point of the cam profile when the levers are closed. The cam-supported release plate 82 in turn rigidly supports bearing plate 80 to maintain cable tension.